GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5300
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2011
HERITAGE STATUS FOR WESTERN GHATS
Rane Dr. Nilesh Narayan

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the sites in Western Ghats identified and submitted to the UNESCO for inclusion in the World Heritage Site, State-wise;

(b) whether the process of selection and submission had the concurrence of all the concerned States;

(c) if so, whether any State including Karnataka had opposed the proposal;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Ministry to address these concerns?

Answer

MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA)

(a) There are 39 sites in the Western Ghats in the States of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra that have been identified and included in the serial nomination of the Western Ghats. The details are at Annexure-I.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) & (d) All concerned State Governments had given consent to the proposal. However, the Government of Karnataka suddenly and unilaterally withdrew the consent to the proposal to include 10 sites in Karnataka vide letter dated 17th June, 2011.

(e) The Minister of Environment and Forests has written to Chief Minister, Karnataka vide letter dated 20th June, 2011 dispelling the unfounded concerns of the State, and not to insist on the withdrawal of 10 sites of Karnataka from the country's proposal for inscription of 39 serial sites falling in the Western Ghats region in four states. It has been impressed upon the Government of Karnataka that the World Heritage designation to a site, in no way affects the present management regime of the site, which would continue to be managed through its existing Management Plan and/ or Working Plan under the legal provisions of the country's Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972; Indian Forest Act, 1927; and the Forest Rights Act, 2006.In other words, the UNESCO would not impose any legal regime of its own even when the sites gets included in the World Heritage List, and the national laws would always remain supreme. Further, the local and tribal communities living in and around these 39 serial sites would not be adversely affected by the World Heritage designation.